

MINUTES
OPC MEETING
January 15, 2015

First Selectman Jayme Stevenson called the meeting to order in Room 206 of Town Hall at 8:36 a.m.

Present were First Selectman, Jayme Stevenson; Board of Education Chairman, Betsy Hagerty-Ross; Planning & Zoning Chairman, Susan Cameron; RTM Moderator, Sarah Seelye; Board of Finance Chairman, Elizabeth Mao and State Representative, Terrie Wood. Also in attendance was Selectman Susan Marks and Town Administrator, Karl Kilduff.

Planning & Zoning Commission

Ms. Cameron noted that the Town Plan of Conservation and Development remains a priority for Planning & Zoning. Information about the plan may be found near the bottom of the homepage of the Town's website.

A sub-committee of the Planning & Zoning Commission has been created to consider possible changes to ZBA regulations.

Several large development projects are on the horizon: two in Noroton Heights and one in downtown. A discussion of downtown parking ensued.

Mrs. Stevenson asked that Planning & Zoning Commission keep Incentive Housing Zones on its radar because it will be pertinent to work being done on housing initiatives at the State level.

State Representative

The new session in Hartford is underway. The Governor has introduced transportation initiatives but funding them will be an issue. The State has been using revenue from Premium Bonds to cover operating expenses. Ms. Wood is excited to be working on the Finance, Revenue & Bonding Committee as it will allow her to help steer two proposed bills. The first bill would force transparency in current premium bond revenues and the second bill would limit the use of the premium bond revenues to paying down the State debt.

Mrs. Wood is co-sponsoring three bills related to 8-30g and is actively working with the M.O.R.E. Commission to advocate for special education policies, especially in support of early literacy programs.

Board of Finance

Mrs. Mao announced that Mrs. Gwen Mogenson has resigned from the Board of Finance and that Mrs. Mogenson was a dedicated and professional member of the Board who will be missed. Mrs. Mao also mentioned that she's very impressed with the new Director of Public Works, Ed Gentile. Mr. Gentile has attended Board of Finance meetings to explain his transfer requests and answer any questions. Mrs. Seelye also stated that she appreciates the summaries he has submitted to help RTM members understand his transfer requests.

Representative Town Meeting

Mrs. Seelye noted that the RTM rules committee is scheduled to meet January 19, 2015 and will address a Police Department non-emergency agreement, the Teachers' Association contract agreement with the Board of Education and sewer transfer requests. The full RTM meets on January 26, 2015. The Director of Planning & Zoning will update the RTM on the Town Plan of Conservation & Development at its meeting on February 23, 2015.

Board of Education

Mrs. Hagerty-Ross briefly discussed the agreement reached between the BOE and the Teachers' Association. Milone and MacBroom will report on enrollment findings in the next couple of weeks. Lastly, the State has reviewed Darien's special education practices and procedures and determined that they are in compliance with State guidelines.

First Selectman

First Selectman Stevenson mentioned that the BOS passed a motion requiring people on the railroad parking waitlists to renew their waitlist request yearly. Hopefully, the Town will be able to post the waitlist on-line in the future. A minimal maintenance fee is applied to each renewal request.

The Town has applied for a second moratorium under 8-30g and should know the results of the application in mid to late March.

The budget process is underway. The Town Administrator, Karl Kilduff, has been carefully reviewing each department's budget for any cost savings. Due to the library's presentation of Behind the Orange Curtain, an important film on heroin addiction, Mrs. Stevenson may reschedule the Town Administrator's budget presentation to the BOS from January 27, 2015 to January 28, 2015. Mrs. Stevenson expressed disappointment that the Consolidated Services Working Group has not yet established any tangible budget savings.

The work with representatives of Yankee Gas to promote new gas line installations in Darien, especially where new major development projects are under way, is ongoing.

First Selectman Stevenson asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the OPC meeting held on November 20, 2014. Mr. Cameron moved to approve the minutes. Mrs. Mao seconded and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

First Selectman Stevenson asked for a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Hagerty-Ross moved to adjourn, seconded by Mrs. Mao and approved by unanimous vote. The meeting adjourned at 9:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda O'Leary
Recording Secretary